

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 2400

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EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG TECH YO US
SUBJ: BAKARIC PRESS CONFERENCE: KRSKO

1. SUMMARY: YUGOSLAV LEADERSHIP HAS OFFICIALLY GONE PUBLIC ON KRSKO. BAKARIC IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION DURING PRESS CONFERENCE APR 16 SAID THAT YUGOSLAVIA COULD NOT ACCEPT THE NEW OBLIGATIONS RAISED BY THE US IN CONNECTION WITH FUEL AND EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES FOR KRSKO. AT SAME PRESS CONFERENCE FEC VICE PRESIDENT SEFER SAID THAT IN QUESTION ARE MATTERS WHICH WERE NOT MENTIONED IN THE CONCLUDED AGREEMENT. BY GOING PUBLIC, GOY HAS SEEMINGLY LIMITED ITS ABILITY TO RETREAT FROM LINE LAID DOWN BY BAKARIC AND APPARENTLY HOPES FOR FURTHER US INVOLVEMENT. PRESUMABLY IT HAS DECIDED TO ACCEPT ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF EITHER LONG DELAY IN SOLUTION OR ACTUAL COLLAPSE OF PROJECT IF SUCH MOVEMENT NOT FORTHCOMING. END SUMMARY.

2. CROATIAN MEMBER OF YUGOSLAV PRESIDENCY VLADIMIR BAKARIC AND OTHER HIGH RANKING YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS FIELDDED QUESTIONS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES DURING A THREE-HOUR PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN ZAGREB FOR THE FOREIGN PRESS OSTENSIBLY TO REVIEW PREPARATIONS FOR THE 11TH LCY
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CONGRESS. IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT BAKARIC PREPARED THE WAY FOR QUESTIONS ON KRSKO BY MENTIONING PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY. SEVERAL OF THE YUGOSLAV OFFICIALS GAVE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE. BAKARIC FIXED THE BLAME ON THE U.S. FOR THE IMPASSE OVER FUEL AND EQUIPMENT DELIVERIES TO KRSKO STATING THE U.S. IS ASKING FOR NEW OBLIGATIONS WHICH YUGOSLAVIA

CANNOT ACCEPT. (BAKARIC NOTED THAT SIROTKOVIC'S CROATIAN DELEGATION IS NOW VISITING THE U.S. AND IS DISCUSSING THIS MATTER AMONG OTHERS).

3. ASSISTANT FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECRETARY (MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS) MILJAN KOMATINA ADDED THAT THE OBSTACLES DELAYING DELIVERY OF THE CONTRACTED EQUIPMENT AND FUEL WERE PLACED AFTER THE USG CONSENTED TO THE KRSKO AGREEMENT. SEFER REITERATED THE LINE ON NEW OBLIGATIONS ADDING THAT THE U.S. DEMANDS CONTROL OVER DELIVERED EQUIPMENT AND FUEL IN YUGOSLAVIA, SOMETHING UNACCEPTABLE FOR YUGOSLAVIA.

4. ALLUDING TO "CERTAIN RUMORS IN THE WESTERN PRESS THAT YUGOSLAVIA ALLEGEDLY INTENDS TO WITHDRAW FROM" THE NPT, BAKARIC SAID THAT WHAT IS IN QUESTION IS NOT THE INTENTIONS OF YUGOSLAVIA BUT THAT THE NUCLEAR POWERS DO NOT FULFILL SOME OF THEIR CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS, WHICH HE SAID RELATES TO ATTEMPTS TO PRESERVE THE "NUCLEAR MONOPOLY". ON THE QUESTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS BAKARIC SAID "OUR INDUSTRY CANNOT MAKE THE ATOMIC BOMB" BUT YUGOSLAVIA IS SEARCHING FOR POSSIBILITY OF USING NEW NUCLEAR POWER MORE WIDELY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES.

5. KOMATINA MENTIONED THAT THE UTILIZATION OF NUCLEAR POWER FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES WAS DISCUSSED AT THE RECENT NACCFM IN NEW DELHI, ESPECIALLY THE QUESTION OF TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY, AND REMARKED THAT IT IS A POSSIBLE FIELD FOR NON-ALIGNED COOPERATION.

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6. COMMENT: KRSKO AND NUCLEAR ENERGY IN GENERAL WERE NOT THE ONLY SUBJECTS RAISED. (WE WILL REPORT OTHER ASPECTS OF PRESS CONFERENCE SEPARATELY.) HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE ONE OF THE REASONS FOR HOLDING THE PRESS CONFERENCE MAY HAVE BEEN TO AIR KRSKO PUBLICLY; AND ONE OF THE REASONS FOR HAVING BAKARIC CONDUCT THE CONFERENCE IN ZAGREB, CAPITAL OF ONE OF THE REPUBLICS TO BENEFIT FROM KRSKO, IS TO DEMONSTRATE THE UNITY OF THE YUGOSLAV LEADERSHIP IN RESISTING U.S. "PRESSURE" TO REDEFINE THE YUGOSLAV COMMITMENT. ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE YUGOSLAVS HAVE BEEN WORKING UP TO THIS AND INDEED IN VARIOUS WAYS HAVE PRESENTED THEIR CASE ON KRSKO PUBLICLY ALREADY, BAKARIC'S REMARKS ARE THE MOST EXPLICIT HIGH-LEVEL GOY COMMENTS TO DATE. IT IS HARD TO SEE HOW THE GOY COULD GRACEFULLY RETREAT, AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE MAJOR US DEMANDS ARE CONCERNED. WE ASSUME THAT THIS MEANS THAT THE GOY ANTICIPATES FURTHER MOVEMENT BY THE US, OR, IF THIS NOT FORTHCOMING,

IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN IMPASSE
FOR KRSKO. YORK

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